

From coffee kitchen to start-up forge: the success story of the Digital.Lab at Witzenmann

Coffee improves concentration and problem-solving skills and promotes togetherness when you drink it together - basic ingredients you need for creative ideas. So why not use the coffee kitchen as a hotbed of innovation? Witzenmann's Digital.Lab does just that: founded with a strategic vision in the coffee kitchen, it has developed into a driver of innovation within the company and has thus become the driving force behind Witzenmann's digital transformation. With around 50 dedicated employees who use it regularly, the Digital.Lab is an important place for technology testing and business model innovation. It stands for the consistent implementation of the company's own digital strategy and symbolises Witzenmann's commitment to digital change as well as its willingness to break new ground and promote innovative ideas.



If you want to remain competitive in the industry, drive innovation and not lose touch with international markets, you cannot afford to oversleep the digital transformation. What does it take? An alert mind with a clear strategy and the courage to try something new. To this end, Witzenmann, the world's leading expert in the safe and efficient management of media and energy for mobility and industry, is relying on its own digital laboratory as part of its Digital Strategy 2025. "The aim of the company management is to make Witzenmann the winner of the digital transformation and, above all, to promote digital innovations, which is why our Digital.Lab is a logical and correct step. For this reason, we also like to call our [Digital.Lab](#) our greenhouse for digitally supported innovations," says Philip Paschen, COO/CDO of Witzenmann and continues: "As the inventor of the metal hose and founder of an entire industry, Witzenmann has always stood for innovation, which is why digitalisation suits us so well. Because we know that: If we want to create real - digital - innovation, we have to continuously work on new ideas. Our Digital.Lab is the place where technology enthusiasts, engineers, IT nerds and inventors think up and test digital innovations and drive them forward together with passion".

Pforzheim, 29.04.2024

*Philip Paschen, COO/CDO of Witzenmann***Absolutely digital: from strategy to the lab**

Witzenmann wants to become "absolutely digital" and is currently in the middle of a comprehensive transformation process. This ranges from the digital customer experience to the digitalisation and automation of internal processes and workflows through to cultural components. "Digitalisation is absolutely a team effort for us," says Daniel Rothfuss, Head of Digital.Lab at Witzenmann. This is also how the Digital.Lab came about. "Launched in 2017 in Philip Paschen's office kitchen with just one 3D printer, the management and motivated employees officially founded the Digital.Lab in 2019 as a place for digital culture and digital technologies. After that, it quickly developed into a real digital innovation centre," recalls Paschen.

Today, under the leadership of Daniel Rothfuss, around 50 employees regularly use the Digital.Lab, which has two main tasks: Firstly, it serves to test technology and transfer innovation by driving developments in a production-like environment, utilising technologies such as robotics and 3D printing. On the other hand, it is a centre for business model innovation that questions existing processes within and outside the company and specifically seeks to collaborate with other companies, start-ups and academia. For example, the Group cooperates with more than ten professorships in Pforzheim and Karlsruhe, is involved in "Jugend forscht" and seeks direct dialogue with like-minded companies via its own Digital.Forum. The aim is always to be able to offer customers a double benefit through digital advantage.

*Daniel Rothfuss, Head of Digital.Lab at Witzenmann***Witzenmann Digital.Lab: The place where digital innovations are forged**

To create something new, to research and experiment, you also need the right space: the Digital.Lab is equipped with state-of-the-art digital technology. For example, ideas can be quickly made tangible with a 3D printer or augmented reality. "For me, the Digital.Lab is a creative high-tech laboratory. There are no limits to the research spirit of our employees there. In a very short space of time, it has developed into a digital innovation centre and an incubator for new digital business models," says Paschen. "The new ideas arise either from Witzenmann's core competences or from identified problems and challenges. Projects such as [SMART.WI.](#) - the first digital compensator for flexible line elements - have emerged from our core business, while others, such as PEDLAR, are independent of it," adds Rothfuss.

The company [PEDLAR](#), which was founded together with an external start-up expert and partner, shows what such a successful business innovation can look like. Since August 2023, the start-up, in which Witzenmann now holds a stake, has been offering an uncomplicated solution to a well-known problem: it simplifies the ordering of special requirements for large companies and helps to save costs at the same time. To do this, PEDLAR acts as an intermediary to a wide variety of online shops, which customers then only have to set up once as a supplier. "I am very proud that projects like PEDLAR show that we can live up to our commitment to our customers," says Paschen.

Pforzheim, 29.04.2024

Interview offer

We would be happy to arrange an interview with Philip Paschen and Daniel Rothfuss about Witzenmann's Digital.Lab. Please get in touch with our press contact (Markus Schaupp).

The Witzenmann Group

The Witzenmann Group is the world's leading expert in the safe and efficient channelling of media and energy for mobility and industry. Its headquarters are in Pforzheim. With a total of 22 companies in 17 countries worldwide, the family-owned company employs around 4,300 people. Turnover of € 730 million was achieved in 2022.

Innovation, technology and digital pioneering work characterise Witzenmann: The company is the development partner with the world's broadest product range of metal hoses, expansion joints, metal bellows, pipe supports and vehicle parts and offers intelligent product solutions and services to its customers from a wide range of industries.

Further information is available at:

Witzenmann: <https://www.witzenmann.de/de/>
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Digitisation: <https://www.witzenmann.de/de/digitalisierung.html>
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Images and captions



Caption: View of the Digital.Lab, where the latest technology is used for research and development.

Photo source: Witzenmann



Caption: Philip Paschen, COO/CDO of Witzenmann

Photo source: Witzenmann GmbH



Caption: Daniel Rothfuss, Head of Digital.Lab at Witzenmann

Photo source: Witzenmann GmbH

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